

Current Conditions: Presence or Absence of Wilderness Characteristics

Area Unique Identifier: CO-060-023

Acreage: 12,888.26

Is the area of sufficient size?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Description

This unit of BLM land is identified as CO-060-023. The northern boundary follows a portion of Highway 149. The eastern boundary is by road 3033. The southern boundary is road 3033j and the adjacent Powderhorn Wilderness Study Area (WSA). The western boundary is Highway 149 and private land.

(1) Does the area appear to be natural?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

Description

Within the parcel Indian Creek and West Indian Creek flow through the varying topography. This area has high topographic relief throughout. The northern portion is dominated by severe changes in elevation. The center and southern portion of the parcel consist of rolling hills which are heavily covered with sage brush and wooded areas that increase in size towards the southern boundary. Throughout the parcel the vegetation includes sage brush, pine, aspen, willow, juniper, cottonwood, various grasses and wildflowers. The main human use for this area is livestock grazing. There is evidence of thinning with removal in the southern portion of the parcel that may detract from naturalness; the impact can be seen from the ground as well as on satellite images. There is also the remains of a wooden structure that has collapsed. There is one frequently used camping area within the parcel that contains permanent wooden structures. There are closed roads within this parcel that differ in their level of visibility. Some roads appear to have been used recently and therefore have a high visibility. Other roads have become almost completely overgrown by the vegetation; some to the point where they are no longer visible. Some of these closed routes have been blocked off or marked as being closed to motorized vehicles. All of the human activity within this area results in ± 700 annual visitors.

(2) Does the area (or the remainder of the area if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remainder is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for solitude?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

Description

This parcels topography and heavily wooded vegetation provide outstanding opportunities for solitude. Even though Highway 149 is in close proximity and is a part of the northern and western boundary it does not detract from the solitude within the area.

(3) Does the area (or the remainder of the area if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remainder is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

Description

This area provides plenty of outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. Hiking, wildlife viewing, hunting, backpacking, access to the Powderhorn Wilderness and rock climbing are all available. Indian Creek Point is a commonly used location for rock climbing. This parcel is also a portion of a seasonal hunting area.

Does the area have supplemental values (ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historic value)?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

Description

Views of the San Juan's, Elk Mountains and West Elk Mountains are visible from within the parcel. A large rock formation is present along Indian Creek and can be seen from road 3035 (Picture #11). One potential fen is located in this unit at 0.38 acres with a rating of medium. This parcel contains medium levels of lynx habitat, elk winter habitat, mule deer winter habitat and potential sage grouse wilderness. It also possesses low levels of severe elk winter habitat and severe mule deer habitat.

Summary of Analysis

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Result of Analysis:

1. Does the area meet any of the size requirements? ☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Does the area appear to be natural? ☒ Yes ☐ No
3. Does the area offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive or unconfined type of recreation? ☒ Yes ☐ No
4. Does the area have supplemental values? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Check one

 X The area, or portion of the area, has wilderness characteristics and is identified as lands with wilderness characteristics.

 The area does not have wilderness characteristics.

Prepared by (team members):

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(Name, Title, Date)

Reviewed by District or Field Manager:

Name: Brian S. George Title: Field Manager
Date: 7/24/13

*This form documents information that constitutes an inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under either 43 CFR parts 4 or 1610.5-3.